

# TRAFFIC ZONE

VOLUME 29

Winter 2006



## GDOT 2006 – Done!

## GDOT 2007 – What's Next?

It's hard to believe another year has come and gone. When I look back over all our accomplishments for 2006 all I can say is...Outstanding! And, when I think about where we are headed in 2007 and what we have to do all I can say is...Hold On!

In reflection, 2006 was an outstanding year for GDOT! A year of change and transition, but also a year in which we produced and delivered some very significant, long-term projects and outcomes for our community. A year in which we continued to provide our very full menu of high quality transportation services while facing ever increasing service demands and an on-going and challenging budget situation. A sampling of our key accomplishments for 2006 include:

- **Departmental** reorganization and leadership to help facilitate the formation of a new City department (Field Operations), start of phase III Depot renovations (to complete lease space up-fits, expand GTA/PART waiting areas, and to develop a new dynamic visitors information center), departmental work on numerous community and economic development related projects, significant advancement in our departmental communications and community outreach efforts, and our strong community leadership and Platinum efforts with GDOT's 2006 United Way Campaign (we contributed well over \$17,000!)
- **Engineering Division** leadership and efforts to work with the development community to develop a new set of local/collector street design standards and cross-access ordinance, successful contribution to the design and implementation of Greensboro's first two new modern roundabouts, and advancement of our comprehensive \$28 million signal system replacement project.
- **Planning Division** leadership and efforts to develop and facilitate the adoption of an MPO area-wide Pedestrian and Bicycle master plan (Biped Plan), successful contribution to the planning and implementation of Greensboro's first two new bike lanes, and continued effective coordination and work with NCDOT and PART on MPO and regional transportation planning, funding, and policy matters.

*Continued on page 14*



HEAT's strategic marketing plan included television advertising, promotional contests and yes, rock painting. "The Rock", an unofficial campus bulletin board at Greensboro College gets a makeover prior to the service launch of the new transit service.

**Check out more snapshots on page 18.**



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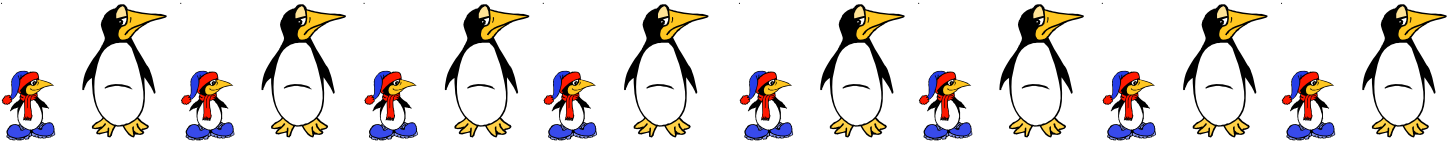
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## GDOT Mission Statement

*We are committed to improving  
safety and mobility and  
providing quality services  
to our community by:*

- *Being Customer-focused and Team Oriented*
- *Being Cost-effective and Innovative*
- *Developing, Empowering, and Recognizing our Employees*

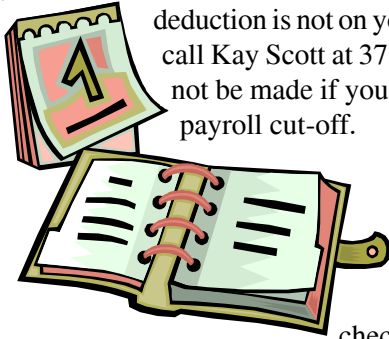


# A D M I N I S T R A T I O N

## *Planned Leave Without Pay (PLWOP)*

The City offers a PLWOP program that allows employees to purchase additional paid leave hours through payroll deduction. To participate, your request must be submitted on the appropriate form that can be printed from the Human Resources home page on the Intranet. You must complete the top portion with your personal information, place your initials beside each "employee acknowledgement," sign your name and have your supervisor approve prior to approval from the GDOT director. **Your request must be received by Kay Scott in Human Resources no later than 5:00 PM on Friday, December 29, 2006 – No Exceptions.** If you are interested and need assistance, please contact either Marcel Edwards or Margie Chrismon

The first PLWOP deduction will be made from paychecks during the January 15, 2007 payroll. If you submit a request and a deduction is not on your January 15, 2007 check stub, please call Kay Scott at 373-2467 **immediately**. Corrections will not be made if you contact her after the January 31, 2007 payroll cut-off.



The maximum hours that can be purchased are determined by your leave earning rate which is printed on the request form. The cost of the PLWOP is deducted from your pay check in 24 equal payments on a pre-tax

basis. To calculate the per pay period cost, **divide** the annual salary (as of 12/31/06) by 2080 hours = hourly rate of pay; **multiply** the hourly rate of pay by the number of hours being purchased = total cost; and **divide** the total cost by 24 pay periods = per pay period deduction.

## **New Employee Benefits Book**

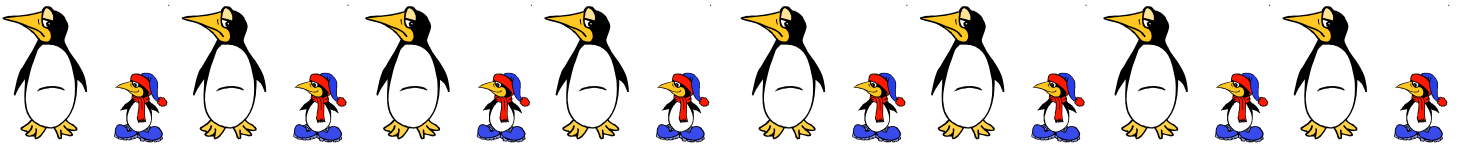
Each employee was issued a binder on September 29, 2006 containing information pertaining to the City's benefits package. This book was redesigned in an effort to easily replace pages when changes in provided benefits occur. The binder is to be retained and updated with new or replacement pages by the employee each year. Please note that in the event this book is lost the employee will be charged a minimal fee to replace the binder.

## **Replacement City ID Badges for non-exempt employees**

If you request and receive a new City ID badge due to a lost or damaged badge you must notify **Marcel Edwards** immediately so that the new card number can be entered into the Stromberg Time Management System. If the new number is not entered, each time you swipe the time clock your punch will go into an unassigned category and will not print in the work record on your time sheet.



After receiving a new card, your old card will be deactivated and will not be recognized as valid by the time clock or in some cases, grant access to a work assigned building. Upon receiving your new card, the old card should be destroyed.



# BUSINESS & OPERATIONS

## Signals Emergency Training Benefits Rescuers as Well as Victims

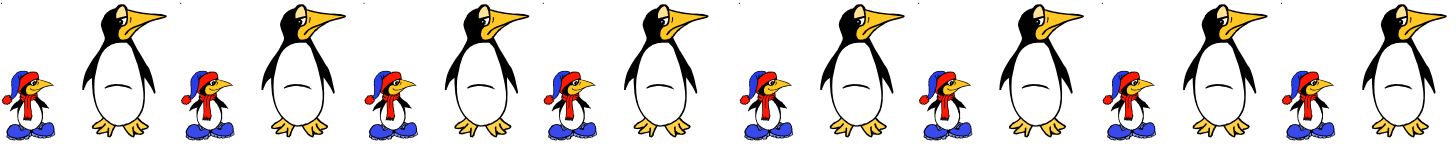
Rescue workers are thoroughly trained to respond to many types of life-threatening emergencies. Besides caring for the health and safety of the party in distress, they must also learn to recognize perilous situations that may cause harm to themselves and act accordingly. Would an emergency response worker recognize the danger presented by a “live” signals truck with up to 24,000 volts flowing through it if they were called to rescue an injured signalman? Super Team Signals Coordinator **Sandy Munroe** pondered this question, and seized an important opportunity to educate rescue workers about signals equipment. As a result, the first High Aerial Rescue Training by GDOT was born. On June 22nd, the Signals Crew convened at the Coliseum parking lot with a number of their maintenance vehicles set up for display. Invited to participate were representatives of Greensboro Fire and Police, EMS, Duke Power, Pike Electric and Time Warner. Each group was given a guided tour of the vehicles to educate them on how to approach an injured signals man on a “live” truck. Sandy explained along with other important facts that a live truck not only will electrify the truck exterior and interior, but also the ground immediately adjacent to the vehicle. The group learned the location of different controls that manipulate the hydraulics of the vehicles as well as many other important functions.

Once the signals crew finished their presentations, then the tables were turned. The Fire representatives began to demonstrate their rescue equipment to give the attendees an idea of the type of equipment that would be used for potential rescues. Questions and answers continued throughout the session until everyone was satisfied with their new knowledge of each other's role.

The High Aerial Rescue training was a resounding success thanks to the hard work of Sandy and Fire Station 5's Daniel Faulk. At the end of the session, each attendee walked away with a better understanding of what to do if an incident was to occur with live power, and that will go a long ways in protecting the lives of the rescuers as well as the victims.







# BUSINESS & OPERATIONS

## Technology Section

The Technology Section has been busy over the past six months. We have been collecting field data, reviewing and streamlining departmental business processes, creating new systems using Datastream, and partnered with MIS to create a Tier II Help Desk within GDOT. Also, the Technology Section has captured over 500 pieces of sign data, 5 signal intersections, over 900 miles of sidewalk and roadway data, and 300 guardrails.

The Planning Division's Level of Service Bicycle Lane Project was a huge undertaking for our section. During a three month period, we collected over 870 miles of roadway data on future bike lanes throughout Guilford County. The types of information captured were the lengths and widths of roadway, and number of lanes to include curb and gutter. We have also continued to collect, update, and maintain data on all sidewalk inventories.

We are in the middle stages of completing the new Markings Preventive Maintenance (PM) schedule. This consists of creating and tying together GIS street segments to allow the Signs and Markings Section to collectively access the streets that will require maintenance during the upcoming year. At the present, we have created over 365 Marking PM's.

The Signal Section elected to review their PM schedules so that a more aggressive approach could be taken to maintain all signalized intersections within the city limits. The end result of their review was to revamp the existing 491 PM schedules and perform a preventive maintenance check twice a year in lieu of the annual check.



Our section has diligently worked with GTA to help create the new HEAT bus routes for area college students. These new bus stops will enhance the student's mobility around the city without driving their own vehicles. This results in a cost savings in fuel consumption, and an ease on traffic congestion. This project consisted of creating 10 new bus stops and 5 new routes in and around the college campuses.

Lastly, the Technology Section is exploring new innovative ways to collect Geospatial data. We are investigating new software called ARCPad to capture GPS data in a layer platform. This platform will enable us to check out specific layers of GIS information with our GPS Trimble units. We will be able to GPS that information and check the layers back into GIS more quickly. We will be able to post process newly collected data and update that GIS layer within minutes instead of hours. We hope to have this process perfected early next year.

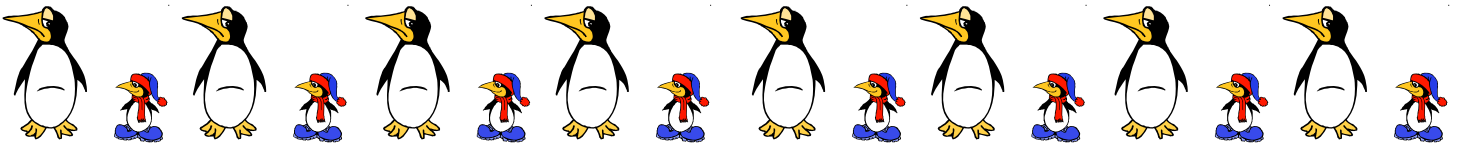
Also, you may have noticed that with each of your Datastream Helpdesk calls you will receive a Helpdesk Survey, as part of our TIER II program. Please take a moment to fill out the survey so that we may evaluate our level of service to you. It's very important to us - so keep filling out those surveys!!

## Got Change?

***Change. Change. Step Right Up and Get Your Change!***

The Parking Section is ready to implement use of its newest bill changer that is located in the park area between the Elm/Greene and Elm/McGee surface lots. We heard a lot of feedback from various merchants and businesses in this block of South Elm St., South Greene St., and West. McGee St. In order to accommodate patrons to their businesses they had to keep on hand a healthy supply of quarters. As part of the public review of the Parking Study Recommendations, this is one of the items we heard about and made a quick fix to make this possible. Whether we go with all parking meters in these surface lots or new technology (such as pay stations) we know that the new bill changer will help add a touch of convenience for the downtown parkers in this part of town.





# BUSINESS & OPERATIONS

## Traffic Signals Section

The Traffic Signal Section is busy keeping pace with all the road and intersection projects that are nearing completion before the arrival of winter weather. We are in the final stages of some long running projects on Hilltop Road from Stanley to Adams Farm Parkway and on Wendover Avenue from Bridford to I-40. Look for several new lanes, turn signals and pedestrian signals at these growing intersections. We are also working on several signals around the new Shops at Friendly Center, including a new mast-arm signal and pedestrian signal improvements at other intersections in the vicinity. We have just completed a rebuild and upgrade project at Market & Mendenhall Street, with new dark green signal heads and pedestrian signals. We have also just completed a four-month project to install low power LED modules in all remaining NCDOT owned signal heads around the City, thanks to our dedicated staff that spent many weekends throughout the summer to get those installed. This January we will begin a 16 month project to make utility adjustments to over 110 miles of GDOT communication cable as part of the new signal system project. We will be moving and transferring our cable on numerous poles across the city in order to make room for the new fiber optic cable that will be installed and to bring our cables into compliance with national safety codes.

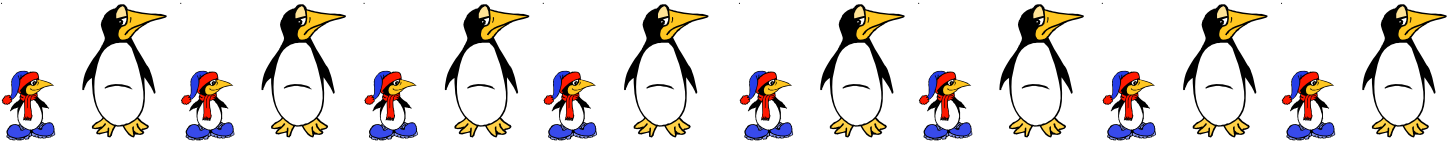


In personnel news we have several announcements. **Tony Mintz** has been promoted from a Traffic Signal Mechanic to a Traffic Signal Technician as of August 1st. We have hired a part-time employee from Signs & Markings to fill Tony's position in signal construction, **David "Big Daddy" Wrenn**. The Traffic Signal Section requested and received approval for three additional positions for budget year 2006-2007 so we have several new employees. **Michael Gunter** started on September 1st as our newest Traffic Signal Technician. **Charles Mitchell** and **Craig Horton** started on October 1st as Traffic Signal Mechanics. Please join us in welcoming these employees to the GDOT team.

## Signs and Markings Section

The Signs & Markings Section has been involved in an array of dynamic and challenging activities over the past few months; Sectional restructuring to enhance the efficiency of delivering basic services; Data Stream process improvements that captures all work data allowing for accurate documentation to evaluate current information and job task data as well as projecting future sectional and departmental needs. We have assisted on many "special projects", such as the Greene Street and the Bass Chapel Road roundabouts; the installation of Bike Lanes on Florida and Spring Garden Streets; providing signage for the GTA/HEAT project; and the A&T Homecoming and associated events, to name a few. Our section was fortunate enough to get approval in converting two part time positions into two full time positions. This enhancement can be attributed to documented justification and a savvy negotiator. The next months look to be equally as challenging with on-going and new projects in the works. We are currently getting equipment and staff assignments organized for the upcoming winter weather season. Rumor has it that the new Bike Route system will become a reality in 2007 and we have also been hearing some intriguing bits of information about GDOT's 2007 Quality Star Program. Wow, what a team we are!!!





# BUSINESS & OPERATIONS

## Parking Section Cameras, Action, Roll

Cameras, Action and we are ready to Roll! On October 17, 2006 the City Council approved the Parking Study Recommendations in order for the Parking Section to begin implementation of quite a few improvements and enhancements to promote day and night time parking in the CBD. The recommendations that are due to be implemented by January 1, 2007 are as follows:

- 1) Add an additional Parking Enforcement officer to the CBD
- 2) Increase the **FREE** time in the parking decks from 30 minutes to 1 hour
- 3) Adjust (reduce) the parking deck rates to \$0.50 per hour
- 4) Change the Elm/Greene and Elm/McGee lots to hourly parking
- 5) Implement marketing plan for Parking
- 6) Increase Depot lot utilization by creating mixed use for monthly and hourly parking
- 7) Creation of a Downtown Parking Committee

Other changes that will be taking place at the beginning of the new fiscal year on July 1, 2007 are:

- 1) Adding a second Parking Enforcement officer to the CBD
- 2) Adjusting the on-street meter rates to \$0.50 per hour

These enhancements will help promote downtown parking that is convenient to the various merchants and venues in the downtown area. Look for the newest changes coming to a parking deck or surface lot nearest you!!



## We've Got a New Attitude!

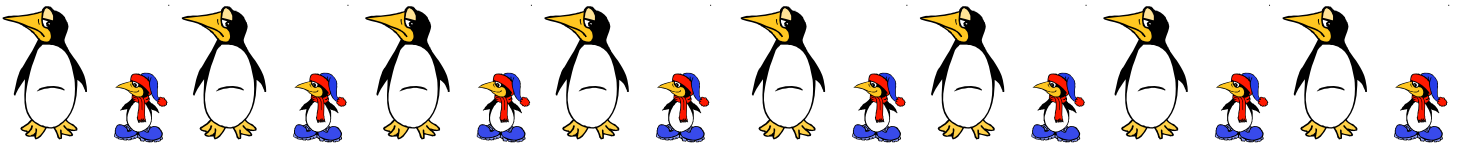
What exactly does this mean? All employees were able to participate in a Supervisory or Customer Service training program that was conducted by Kim Jackson, Chief Executive Officer of the International Parking Institute (IPI). As a cost saving measure, we were able to partner in this training program with the City of High Point and the Piedmont Triad International Airport's parking staff.

Kim took all the supervisors through specific training that relates to what supervisors face with day to day concerns with customers, staff, etc. Also, the staff had customer service training that helped them learn how to better handle customers and diffuse confrontational situations instead of escalating them. The training also lent itself to understanding what each employee brings with them each day to the work place and how each person can make a difference by what they do, the attitude they choose, and how to be more involved in making a difference in the work place.

It was a great training opportunity to continue to develop the Parking staff to the professional level of being in many instances the first and last contact a citizen has with the City of Greensboro. Remember: *Customer Service is our Focus! And Change Is Good!*







# E N G I N E E R I N G

## City Project Update

We continue to track the progress of several roadway and pedestrian improvement projects. The West Wendover Avenue intersection improvement projects are nearing completion with the contractor wrapping up paving for the holidays. Work will resume in early 2007 as there will be a few unfinished items that need to be completed. Franklin Boulevard is also nearing completion but will likely not get final pavement until early 2007. Most of the outside curb has been installed and the project is getting the finishing touches. The West Friendly Avenue widening job is beginning to progress nicely now that utilities have been relocated. Outside curb work continues on the north side of the project and should shift soon to the south. A contract has been awarded and construction is scheduled to begin soon on the "Billy 'Crash' Craddock" Sixteenth Street Bridge Replacement over the Norfolk Southern railway. During construction, Sixteenth Street

will be closed in this vicinity. The Phase II East Market Streetscape project is a continuation of the East Market Streetscape project that will extend the streetscape limits from Church Street to English Street. The project is well underway with the contractor currently working on completing storm sewer construction. The initial construction work focus was focused on the eastern section but the contractor is awaiting demolition of the Ice House in order to proceed further on this section. This project should be completed by the summer of 2007.



## Greene Street Ribbon Cutting

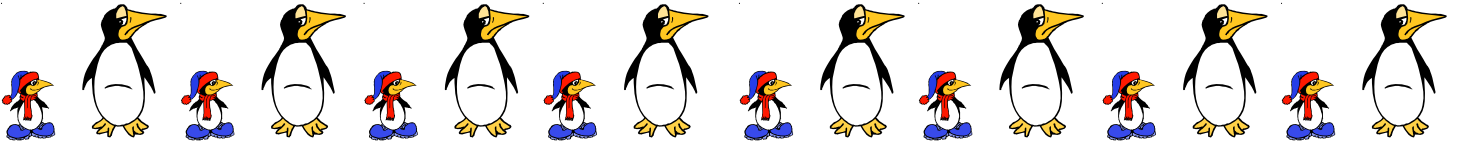
Mayor Keith Holliday, City Manager Mitchell Johnson, Transportation Director **Jim Westmoreland** and other dignitaries participated in a ribbon cutting recently to celebrate the completion of the Greene Street streetscape project. Stretching from Friendly Avenue to Smothers Street, the six-year project included a reduction in travel lanes, pedestrian and streetscape enhancements and angled parking along Greene Street near the Carolina Theater. A unique feature in the streetscape was the construction of the modern roundabout at the intersection of Greene Street and McGee Street. It was a long process from early 2000 when the initial concepts were developed to now, and many downtown businesses and employees had to endure some disruptions to their lives, but the end product has received rave reviews. We want to thank everyone who was involved in the project!



## New Plan Review Implementations

Within the last year we have designed and implemented a new access database that is used to manage the various types of plan checks that we conduct. Although it was "experimental" for 2006, we are hoping to fine tune it and have it on the network beginning in 2007. The database allows us to not only better manage and organize current projects, but will make researching past projects quicker and hopefully easier. Just to put how important this is into perspective, as of mid-November 2006 we have conducted approximately **400** different types of plans checks (City, County, Building, Grading, and Construction) and processed **105** driveway permits (both GDOT and NCDOT jurisdiction)!

In addition to our new database, we have completed the conversion from "hard-copy" to "TIF" files of five-years of existing driveway permit application (2000-current). This will prove to be convenient when conducting research at an existing location. For the years 2000 thru 2005 the files are arranged by permit number. Starting in 2006, project name was included. A sample of a typical file shows the application and site plan. Again, we hope to have these files finalized and on the network beginning in 2007!



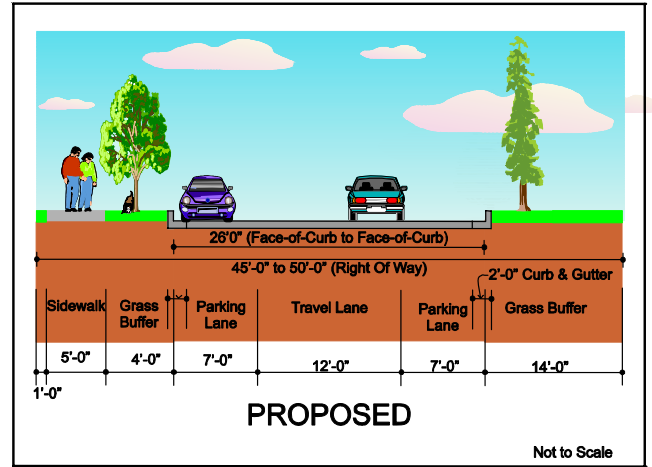
# ENGINEERING

## Street Design Standards

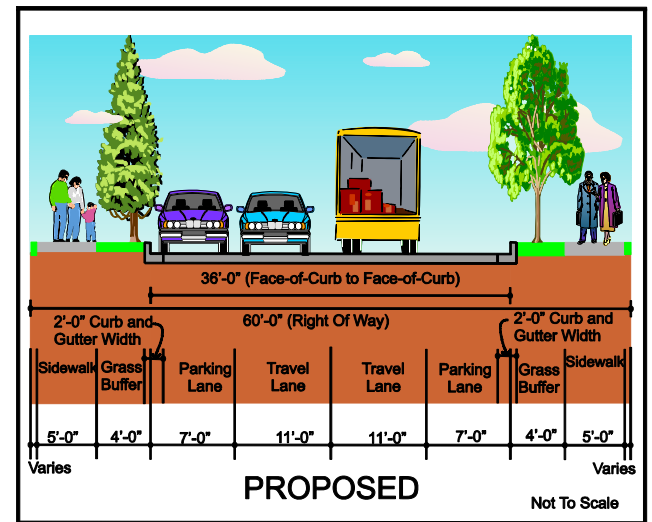
GDOT Engineering along with other City staff (Police, Fire, Planning, GTA, etc.) and the development community are in the process of developing new Street Standards for local streets, collector streets, and thoroughfares. These standards will address community concerns such as speeding traffic, safety, capacity, on-street parking, emergency vehicle access, pedestrian accommodations, bicycle accommodations, and construction costs. The Street Design Standards project is part of the Land Development Ordinance rewrite project. These two projects are to work in conjunction with each other and are an implementation step of the City of Greensboro Connections 2025 Comprehensive Plan. The Street Standard project supports policies 8A.6 and 8F.1 of the City's Comprehensive Plan.

To date, the standards for local streets and collector streets have been completed by the technical team that is charged with the completion of this project. Local streets have been reduced from a 30' cross section to a 26' cross section. Also, for high intensity developments sidewalk will be required on both sides of the local streets. Collector streets will still have a 36' or 40' cross section depending on whether it is a residential or a commercial/industrial collector. However for both of these classifications, the design speed has been lowered, therefore reducing the horizontal alignment requirements. This will allow for greater flexibility for the design of sites for new development. The reduced designs speeds and reduced cross section should have a natural "built-in" traffic calming effect.

The next steps will be to develop and finalize the standards for Minor and Major Thoroughfares. The major item requiring consensus will be the ultimate right of way requirements for thoroughfares. Also, the technical team will need to come to agreement on the requirement for sidewalk on both sides of collector streets. The expected timeline is to finalize the Street Standards for the City of Greensboro and take for approval and adoption by City Council in early 2007.



### Local Streets



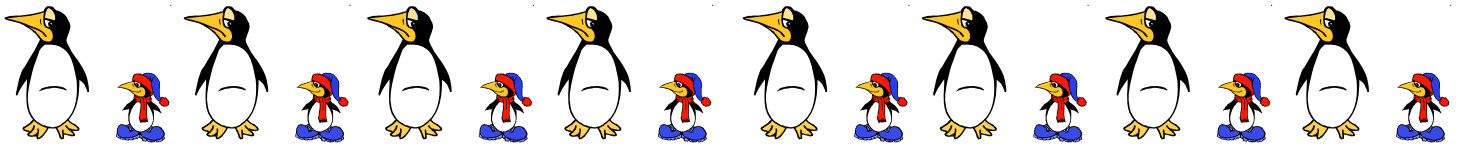
### Collector Streets



## North Elm/Lake Jeanette Roundabout

We have also completed construction on the roundabouts at Bass Chapel Road/North Elm Street/Lake Jeanette Road. Some of the negative perceptions of roundabouts that we heard during the planning process have quickly begun to dissipate as both intersections are serving their purpose to keep traffic moving safely and efficiently. Recently, some modified signing and landscaping was installed to enhance the appearance of the intersection. Use of the roundabout has become second nature for many who use it along with the Greene Street roundabout on a regular basis. For those who are still unfamiliar with the rules of the road regarding roundabouts, visit the GDOT website for information including a user's guide.





# E N G I N E E R I N G

## Engineering Addresses Neighborhood Speed Concerns

GDOT recently completed a traffic study of Dellwood Drive between Lawndale Drive and Cone Boulevard. The biggest resident concerns were speeding and stop sign violations. The study consisted of two neighborhood meetings, two GDOT conducted traffic counts, one resident-conducted traffic count, and various improvements agreed upon by the residents and GDOT. At the first of the two meetings, the residents shared concerns and provided possible solutions. GDOT then performed a traffic count to obtain speed and volume data for this section of roadway. A neighborhood resident also gathered additional speed and volume data by participating in the Neighborhood Speed Watch Program. After the first public meeting, new speed limit signs were installed with bright orange tabs along the top and bottom to draw attention to the 25 mph speed limit. In addition to updating the speed limit signs, one additional speed limit sign was added.

The second neighborhood meeting was held in May 2006. At this meeting GDOT updated the residents on what had been done, the data that had been collected, and provided a summary of the previous concerns and possible solutions, along with some additional possibilities. The solution that GDOT proposed was to place edge lines along the corridor to narrow up the visual perception of the roadway width and reduce overall speeds. It was also suggested that Stop Bars could be added at intersections that did not have them and refreshed at those that did to increase compliance with the stop condition. Other options were considered but the residents and GDOT both agreed upon adding the edge lines and installing/refreshing stop bars.

The edge lines and stop bars were installed in the summer of 2006 and have had a positive affect on traffic in the area. The second GDOT count was recently completed and found a 9% reduction in both speed and volume. Since the summer of 2006, the number of complaints GDOT has received concerning traffic on Dellwood Drive have significantly decreased.

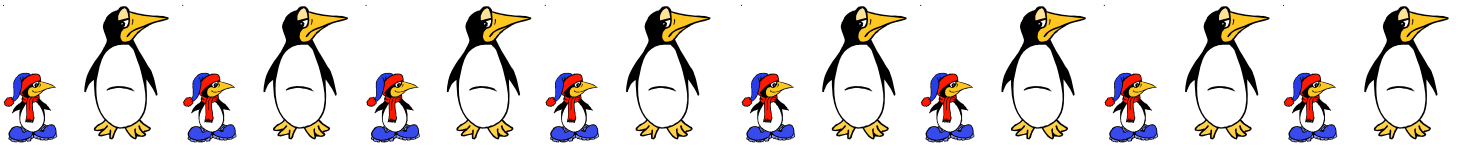


## New Timing Plans for New Garden Road

The recent opening of Greensboro's third Target store required the reconfiguration of the intersection of Highwoods Circle and New Garden Road. Consultants for the developer met with Engineering Division staff to discuss the reconfiguration and to request signal phasing modifications to handle the additional traffic expected to be generated by the major retailer. While this may sound like a simple request, it is not as easy as just increasing the green times of the targeted intersection. Any change would have affected traffic progression at adjacent signalized intersections before and after Highwoods. Signal phasing changes were required at the Bryan Boulevard eastbound ramp and the timing plans for all intersections from Hobbs Road to Jefferson Road had to be reworked to keep traffic moving smoothly. Signal



Optimization Engineer **David Fogleman** was able to come up with the best system of changes for the needed job. The new timing plans incorporate the additional phases required at Highwoods Circle and has greatly improved progression along the entire corridor resulting in less congestion for traffic moving in and out of the Target Shopping Center.



# P L A N N I N G

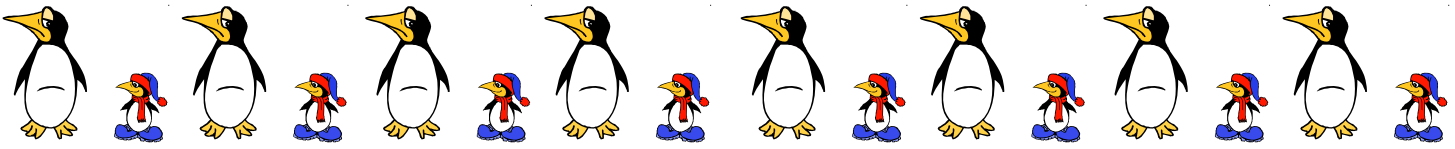
2006 has been a busy year for transportation planning in the Greensboro Area. Some of the highlights from the second half of the year are profiled below. For more details please visit the Planning Division part of the GDOT website. 2007 will continue this year's momentum, with notable activities expected in the areas of long range planning, roadway needs studies, pedestrian and bicycle planning and implementation, and regional transportation planning. Stay tuned for updates in future editions of *The Traffic Zone*.

## ***Greensboro Urban Area Bicycle, Pedestrian, & Greenway Master Plan***

The Metropolitan Planning Organization Transportation Advisory Committee adopted the Bicycle, Pedestrian, & Greenway Master Plan otherwise known as the BiPed Plan at its October 2006 meeting. The full plan and a shortened magazine-length version for easier reading are available at [www.guamapo.org](http://www.guamapo.org). The plan focuses on recommendations for physical facilities, such as bike lanes, sidewalks, off-street trails, and crossing improvements for pedestrians within the MPO area. It also includes supporting policy recommendations, maintenance strategies, and options for education, enforcement, and encouragement. Detailed and comprehensive technical work and extensive public involvement provided a well considered basis for the recommendations. The Greenways part of the plan was closely coordinated with Parks & Recreation and was made possible by a grant from the Moses Cone Wesley Long Community Health Foundation and administered through Action Greensboro. Two major items have already been implemented under the plan as part of the City's resurfacing program: bicycle lanes both along Spring Garden and Florida Streets. NCDOT plans to widen shoulders on Church Street north to Spencer Dixon Road. Sidewalk construction projects continue also, and planning is underway for implementing additional on-street bicycling improvements and publishing a bicycling map. We also anticipate presenting the plan to decision-making bodies within the MPO, including the Greensboro City Council, for their consideration and possible adoption.







# P L A N N I N G

## ***Sidewalk Projects & the Battleground Rail Trail***


Work continues on planning and project development for future sidewalk projects. The next City of Greensboro contract for independent sidewalk construction is expected to go to construction in February 2007 and includes four miles of new sidewalk construction along mainly major roadways in the city. These projects will help connect residents to public transportation, shopping, services, schools and other needed destinations. Projects are included in areas around the City including sections of Randleman Road, Huffine Mill Road, South Holden Road, Elam Avenue, and West Market Street. These projects are an important step in implementing the City Walkability Policy, as are the current roadway enhancement

project contracts, which also include sidewalk construction. Look for more information on upcoming projects as the mid-2007 sidewalk construction contract is developed.

The Battleground Rail Trail will be a high quality pedestrian and bicycle facility connecting the Lake Brandt and Bicentennial Greenways north of Pisgah Church Road south to Markland Drive. The project is currently in the property-acquisition phase, with construction work anticipated to begin in 2007-2008. The trail will connect to a series of area sidewalk projects, and is set up to one day continue south into the downtown area once the remaining piece of the old Atlantic & Yadkin rail line is abandoned.

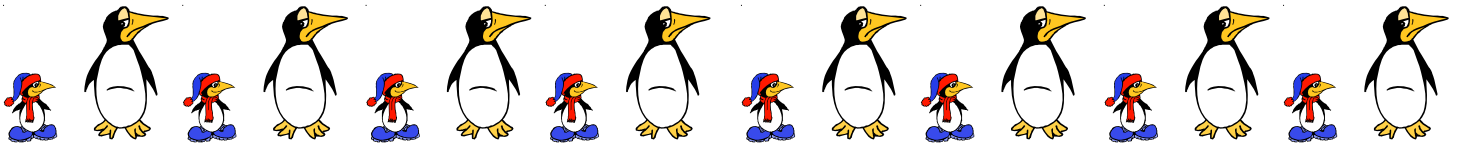
## **2007-2013 Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program**

The Draft 2007-2013 Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) identifies federal and state funded transportation projects proposed by the Greensboro Urban Area over the next seven years. The types of projects listed in the MTIP include highway, public transportation, rail, enhancement, and bicycle and pedestrian projects. The Draft MTIP is developed by the MPO in cooperation with NCDOT and comprises a subset of the State Transportation Improvement Program. Despite continuing transportation funding shortfalls at the state level, the Greensboro area has fared relatively well under the draft TIP. Project delays include the High Point Road project (construction delayed to 2011), the US 220 widening to the north of Greensboro, and the Bridford Parkway Extension (both delayed one year). Important projects remaining on schedule include the Greensboro Signal System and the West Market Street widening from NC 68 to Bunker Hill Road. Notably, construction funding was restored for the Eastern Urban Loop from US 29 to US 70 starting in 2011. The Draft 2007-2013 MTIP will be on display for public review and comments until Monday, January 22, 2007 at [www.guamppo.org](http://www.guamppo.org) and a range of area locations including Greensboro Public Libraries. The MPO will hold public meetings on the Draft 2007-2013 MTIP in January 2007. You may want to take advantage of this opportunity to comment on project schedules, needs, or concerns. Public input will be reviewed by the TAC, and shared with NCDOT officials. MTIP adoption is expected in February or March 2007.

**GREENSBORO URBAN AREA  
Metropolitan Planning Organization**

**Draft Metropolitan Transportation  
Improvement Program  
FY 2007 – FY 2013**  
  
Draft for Public Review and Comment  
  
November 20, 2006  
  
LEAD PLANNING AGENCY:  
City of Greensboro Department of Transportation  
Post Office Box 3156, Greensboro, NC 27402  
E-mail: [guamppo@greensboro.nc.gov](mailto:guamppo@greensboro.nc.gov) / Phone (336) 373-4268 / Fax (336) 413-4171





# P L A N N I N G

## Comprehensive Transportation Plan

The Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) is a new requirement resulting from a revision in state law concerning transportation planning in North Carolina. The revisions modified the requirement for a Thoroughfare Plan to provide a more comprehensive long term framework. The CTP is a series of maps and includes highway, bicycle, pedestrian, and public transportation / rail elements. The CTP must be approved by the MPO and NCDOT. For MPO's, the CTP provides a long term needs plan that is not limited by financial forecasts for specific timeframes. For the MPO, the CTP becomes an illustrative set of needs and additional process steps to supplement the federally mandated Long Range Transportation Planning process. It is important to note that although NCDOT no longer requires the thoroughfare plan, the MPO will continue to maintain it for the purposes of enforcing the City and County Street Ordinances. MPO staff has been working on the development of the CTP over the last year. All mapping for the CTP has generally been developed, except for the highway element. Efforts are currently underway to develop the highway map and are expected to be completed by the end of this year. Development of the CTP will continue and will be woven into the update to the 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan to begin in 2007.



BaPeo

## Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety

GDOT continues to promote pedestrian and bicycle safety with community outreach and education activities. One aspect of this has been seeking to promote safe walking and bicycling to school. Working with the Guilford County Schools, GDOT has implemented a pilot program of inventorying, prioritizing, and implementing work items to improve pedestrian and bicycling safety around a set of schools with a significant amount of walking and bicycling already occurring. The schools may elect to follow-up with education and enforcement programs including seeking funding through the Safe Routes to School program administered by NCDOT with federal funding support.

## Travel Demand Model

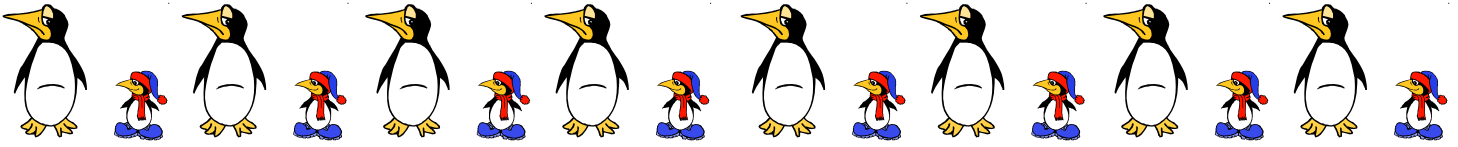
The travel demand model is an important tool for estimating current and potential future travel demand and conditions on major roadways, at the regional level and on specific corridors in the Greensboro urban area. A new and improved Triad Travel Demand Model will be complete and ready for use in early 2007. The model is the result of a collaborative five-year effort between Greensboro, Winston-Salem, High Point, Burlington, NCDOT, and the Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation (PART), and will use the latest information about area travel conditions and future growth assumptions. The new model will not only be used to estimate vehicular traffic for proposed projects, but will also be used in PART's Alternative Analysis Study to determine the feasibility of fixed-guideway transit or bus rapid transit for the Triad area. Completion of the model will allow a range of MPO roadway network studies to proceed. Look for more information in future issues of the Traffic Zone!

greensboro urban area



## New MPO Logo Unveiled

Peter Ohlms and Kevin Elwood recently collaborated to produce a new logo for the Metropolitan Planning Organization. Field tested with MPO stakeholders, the new logo will become official at the start of 2007.



# PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

## New GTA Bus Amenities Take Riders to New Heights

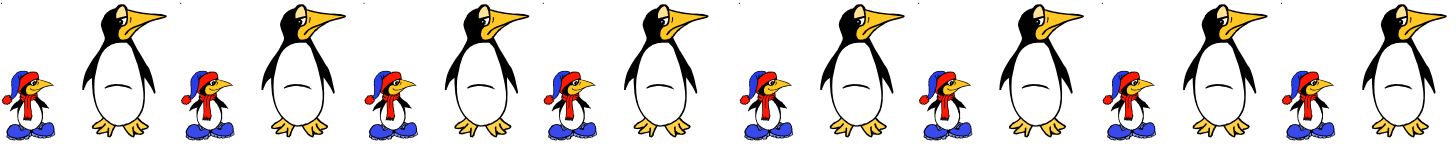
Want a view from up above? Get onboard GTA. New bi-level buses are now coming on line at Greensboro Transit Authority that feature elevated rear decks where passengers can get an even higher view of the outside world. Built by Gillig Corporation, the ten new low-floor buses GTA will place into service contain many features to provide convenient access for patrons in all stages of mobility. Each 35-passenger bus contains the popular “kneeling” action that lowers the bus to a mere 2 ½ inches off the ground for easier boarding. For GTA riders they also offer folding ramps on the entry doors that are cable of handling wheelchairs of multiple sizes.

Built in Haywood, California, all of the buses have been completed and will be delivered by December 20th. Featuring new Cummins ISL engines, the buses are expected to offer even more fuel efficiency than the current fleet. Upon arrival, each vehicle goes through a post-delivery inspection by GTA and the manufacturer representative to insure the quality of the final product. Once accepted, the buses are cleaned thoroughly inside and out to prepare for service. Radios are installed and the fare boxes and destination signs are programmed with the proper data. Finally, the GTA operators are given a thorough two-day orientation on the new vehicles. Although they are made by the same manufacturer as other buses in the GTA fleet, these contain many new options that the operator must be familiar with for the safety and comfort of the passengers.

The new buses will begin service January of 2007 in support of GTA’s system-wide move to 30-minute service. We believe patrons will be very pleased with the look and the ride of GTA’s newest additions.







*From Jim Westmoreland, continued from page 1*

- **Public Transportation Division** leadership and efforts to develop and implement Greensboro's new college and university service (HEAT), to work with a newly appointed City Council task force on GTA's budget issues and service needs, to manage and provide quality service to a record high 3+ million plus GTA riders, and to develop and implement Greensboro's first cross-town connector (Southtown 12A) and upcoming 30 minute daily service (January 07);
- **Business and Operations Division** leadership and efforts to work with downtown stakeholders to develop and implement a comprehensive set of downtown parking recommendations, to facilitate the on-going planning and implementation of GDOT's office and field technology needs, and to successfully respond to the demands and needs of citizens, developers, and our internal staff with our very talented administrative and parking operations teams and our hard working and ever responsive operations personnel (Signs, Markings, and Signals).

Looking forward to 2007, we will continue to be challenged to hold each and every City budget dollar to it's absolute highest and best use. We will need to continue to be highly responsive to all requests and to continue to provide our core transportation services at their highest levels. Also, we will need to begin focusing on our future transportation Capital and Bond project needs, continue to fulfill GDOT's mission and complete all items identified in our 06-07 departmental work plan, continue to place a strong emphasis on employee training/development and succession planning, and reenergize our GDOT Quality Program.

Speaking of Quality...as I alluded to at our Fall Quality Program Luncheon, 2007 will be the year we affirm Quality as our fifth core value and the year we focus on "meeting citizens needs, while exceeding their expectations". Proven elements like Back to Basics, Safety Program, 3D Problem Solving Process, and Quality Awards will all be featured as well as other key elements of Quality that will make us even better. These other elements will include defining a set of Quality Standards and Expectations for GDOT and a monthly focus on Customer Service, Continuous Process Review and Improvement, Communications, Project Coordination, Teamwork, Employee Training and Development, and Correspondence Development. So what's your role? Get involved, share your ideas, and ride along as we take our GDOT Quality Program to the next level!

Finally, and as we close the door on 2006, I did want to take a moment to personally thank each of you for a job well done, for continuing to share yourself and your outstanding professional talents with our department and community, and for the significant difference you make on a daily basis! It remains my highest honor and privilege to serve the citizens of Greensboro with each of you. Please have a safe and blessed holiday season and if at all possible, do plan to take some time off to spend with your family, loved ones, and friends...2007 is just around the corner and, we have much great work left to do!

*Jim Westmoreland  
Director of Transportation*

## January Introduces a New and Improved System

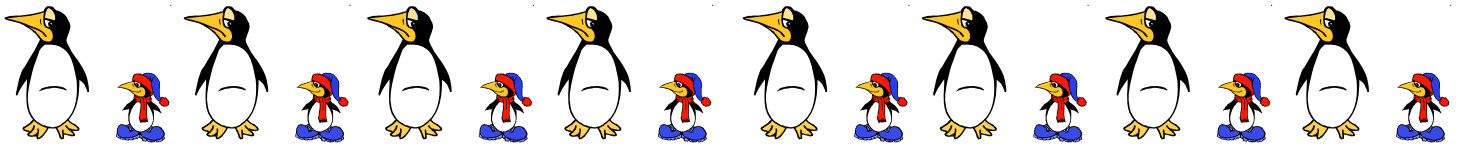
Effective January 1, 2007, GTA will implement 30-minute transit service system-wide. Currently, there are some routes that run on the hour and some that run on the half-hour. Having daily 30-minute service system-wide should alleviate crowded conditions on hourly routes by shifting some of the demand from the overcrowded top of the hour buses to the half-hour buses.

## GTA Launches New Service with Route 12A Southtown Connector

On September 6th, GTA launched a new bus connector route serving the southern end of the city of Greensboro. Route 12A, the Southtown Connector offers an extension of the current Route 12 S. Elm-Eugene Street service. The new connector begins on S. Elm-Eugene at JJ Drive near Home Depot and runs from 5:25 a.m. to 6:45 p.m. Mondays – Fridays and 6:20 a.m. to 6:20 p.m. on Saturdays. Route 12A offers riders access to the new Walmart Supercenter and other stores and restaurants of Elmsley Square Shopping Center. Also on the route, Hemphill Branch Library, Allen Middle School, Holden Crossing Shopping Center and Wet n' Wild water park. The connector also interchanges with Route 2 offering service to Four Seasons Town Center.

*Continued on page 15*





# PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

## Rosa Parks Day 2006

On December 1st, GTA marked 51 years since Mrs. Rosa Parks changed the face of civil rights using the public transportation platform. On that day in 1955, Mrs. Parks was asked to yield her seat on a Montgomery, Alabama city bus. Despite being required to by the Montgomery City code, she refused and was subsequently arrested. That moment sparked the start of the modern day civil rights movement. GTA along with its contractor Veolia Transportation honored the memory of Mrs. Parks with the distribution of buttons to riders. Starting this month, GTA is also issuing commemorative fare passes featuring the images of Rosa Parks. Each fare card displays several notable images from the heroic actions of Rosa Parks including her arrest photo and the Congressional Medal of Honor presented by President Bill Clinton in 1999. Celebrating an important moment in civil rights that spotlighted public transportation was a no-brainer for Public Transportation Manager **Libby James**. "Municipal transit systems were heavily utilized in the 1950's by citizens of all races," says Libby. "In many places unfortunately, their operations mirrored community attitudes and even municipal laws with a virtual dividing line in the bus aisle separating the races. But Mrs. Parks' standing up...or rather, sitting down focused the attention of the nation on equal rights of all Americans. That is definitely something worth celebrating."

The Rosa Parks commemorative passes are available at all GTA fare outlets while supplies last.



## GTA Holiday Promotions

In keeping with its practice of giving back to the community, the Greensboro Transit Authority adopted a needy family through Salvation Army to help spread holiday cheer throughout the Christmas holidays. The children range in ages from 4 months to 5 years old. The GTA staff and board sought to make this Christmas the most memorable Christmas ever by purchasing items from the family's wish list.

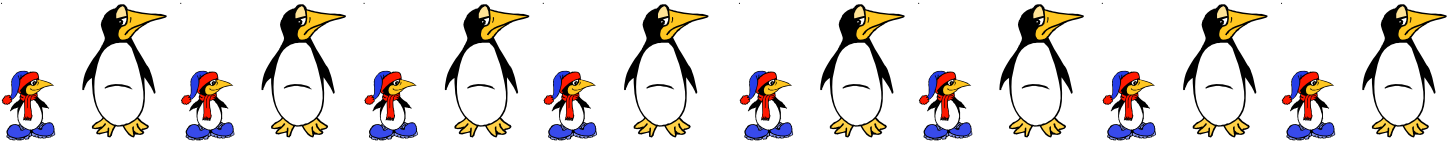
Also during this season of giving, the Greensboro Transit Authority has volunteered to assist those within the Greensboro community who are less fortunate by serving lunch at the Greensboro Urban Ministry. This is just a small way to say, "Thank you, Greensboro" for riding GTA!

## Winners from the 2006 Buses to Books Summer Reading Program Named

Three local students were recognized by the GTA Board this year for their participation in the 2006 *Buses to Books* writing contest. They include Imani Matherson (age 11 yrs.), Finesse Wilson (age 15 yrs.) and Michaela Jenkins (age 9 yrs.). They each wrote an essay on the benefits of public transportation in the community.

The *Buses to Books* program has grown steadily over the years. This year, ridership on the 10-week program totaled 5,056 trips compared to 3,394 trips taken on the program last year. Like previous years, the program sought to promote literacy among school aged children between the ages of 6-17 years old, while introducing them to the benefits of public transportation. This partnership between the Greensboro Public Library and the Greensboro Transit Authority has been an excellent way to improve literacy within the Greensboro community while, at the same time, stimulate greater interest in public transportation among Greensboro's youth.





# PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

*New Route, continued from page 13*

“This much-needed new route is the result of a recognized need for continuing public transportation growth in Greensboro” said Libby James. “We recognize that public transportation is a major key to continued growth in the city in areas of employment, economic development and more. We are excited that the GTA system continues to evolve to meet the growing needs of our citizens.”

To celebrate the arrival of the Southtown Connector, GTA held a public information event on Saturday, September 9th at the Wal-mart Supercenter on S. Elm-Eugene.

The Southtown Connector offers the same low fares as all other GTA services - \$1 per trip with free transfers. The GTA routes are all interchangeable with the new HEAT service routes in the area. Route information on 12A and GTA's other routes and connectors are available at [www.greensboro-nc.gov/gta](http://www.greensboro-nc.gov/gta). HEAT route information is available at [www.rideheat.com](http://www.rideheat.com)



## The Heat Is On!

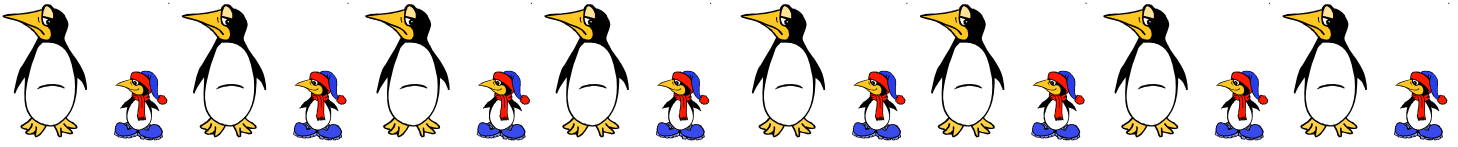
During August 2006, the Greensboro Transit Authority introduced its newest service, HEAT (Higher Education Area Transit) to the Greensboro community. Made possible by federal and state grants, as well as six partnering colleges and universities, the service provides expanded transportation service not only to qualified students, but to the riding public. Six newly designed routes now serve each of the college campuses in addition to downtown, limited student housing and the Friendly Shopping Center. As of November 11, 2006, HEAT reportedly provided over 125,000 passenger trips. Not only have area students accessed the HEAT service to get to and from classes, employment, recreation, etc., but GTA regular bus riders have also used the service for their transit needs at the nominal fee of \$1.00 for

the base fare. Qualified students ride both the HEAT service and the GTA system on a fare free basis.

The HEAT service has proven instrumental in alleviating parking problems on campuses and reducing traffic on Greensboro's roadways. The demand for the HEAT service reportedly rose sharply during the start of the fall semester. Thus, a number of service enhancements, including larger vehicles and increased service frequency, were made to meet rider needs. “It is wonderful to see that all of the effort put into HEAT by the City Council, institutional partners and staff is paying off for the overall community”, said **Libby James**, Public Transportation Division Manager. Indeed it is! Look for the colorful vehicles at a stop near you!



[www.rideheat.com](http://www.rideheat.com)



## The “G” is for “Groovy!”

Quality Fever overtook GDOT recently as the department met once again for the bi-annual Quality Luncheon and Q-Awards. Assembling at Bur-Mil Park clubhouse, the various divisions and sections of GDOT used the opportunity to come together with their peers, who they may not often cross paths with during the course of normal business. Our latest event offered a 1970’s theme complete with a disco ball and vinyl record table pieces. Emcee **Brian Shoemaker** of Signals led the program, beginning with housekeeping details and the blessing by Planning’s **Lydia McIntyre**. The camaraderie continued through the meal as GDOT relaxed to a scrumptious catered lunch.

The formal program then began with **Jim Westmoreland** who provided brief updates on the status of issues within the City. Then, he launched into his Quality Remarks...an outline of the 2007 Quality Program and focus areas for the department. His plan included the theme for each of the twelve months along with the lead persons who will be spearheading the effort.

Following the conclusion of Jim’s remarks were Quality updates by the Division Managers who shared with the group the status of their departmental pursuits of quality. During his report, Business and Operations Manager **Michael Cramer** took a moment to recognize the department for its successful City/County Campaign, raising just over \$17,000...128% of our goal! After giving plaques of recognition to the section heads, he completed his portion with the Safety Report.

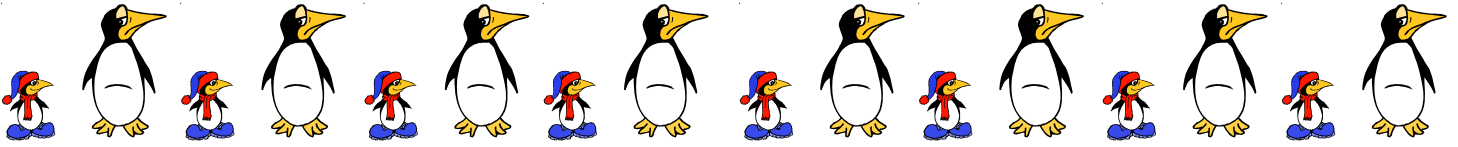
Strategic Information Specialist **Kevin Elwood** updated the department on how the Back to Basics committee had agreed to go “back to basics” with the program. Back to Basics 2007 will kick off on January 1st with the hopes of getting a 95% participation rate in the program. Back to Basics, which has been on a hiatus for much of the year, has proven its worth in reducing the number of outstanding city infrastructure problems. Back to Basics in essence creates a mobile task force targeting burned out signals, potholes, graffiti and a number of other maintenance issues. The committee is looking forward to the re-launch in January and hopes to get a large amount of support.

Finally, last but not least, the program moved into the Q Awards. The host of the Q Awards, GTA’s **George Linney** made a funky entrance to the Tramm’s “Disco Inferno” clad in leather coat and afro wig complete with hair pick. After striking a few superfly poses, George introduced the awards and proceeded with announcing the nominees and winners of the awards. The winners were: Trailblazer Award – **Adam Fischer, Chris Spencer, Tyler Meyer** and **Peggy Holland**; At Your Service Award – **Margie Chrismon**; and the Quality Star Award – The HEAT Project Team.

Following the closing remarks by Jim, the group adjourned, committed to spreading Quality Fever in everything that they do.







## Santa Train comes to town!

As the world's most famous commuter, even Santa Claus sometimes gets weary of being behind the wheel...I mean reins. That's when Saint Nick parks the sleigh, puts his feet up and takes the train. On December 1st, Santa and his helpers made their annual trip from Raleigh to Greensboro aboard the "Santa Train." Passengers and visitors at the J. Douglas Galyon Depot were given a special treat as the jolly Santa visited with the patrons of the historic downtown train station. Upon arrival, Santa took his place upon a specially decorated throne and offered his knee to any child with a Christmas wish. Although Santa was of course the main attraction, Depot patrons were also able to visit the Carolina Model Railroaders exhibition hall opened especially for the event. There, they were able to view model trains of all types and sizes including



their massive central layout. But back in the Amtrak station, NC Rail Volunteer Train Hosts were busy serving up loads of cookies and cups brimming with mulled cider to warm chilled December bones.

Alas, the fun had to come to an end. Santa said his goodbyes as he strolled down the tunnel to his awaiting train that would carry him back to the North Pole by way of Raleigh. As much as Saint Nick enjoyed his commute to the Gate City by rail, don't be surprised to see him delivering Christmas presents by train this year. Special thanks to admin's **Linda Paschal** and the Greensboro Scene Shop for their help in the preparations for Santa's visit.



*A forerunner of today's local transit buses, an electric trolley bus pauses outside of Jefferson Pilot on Greene Street.*

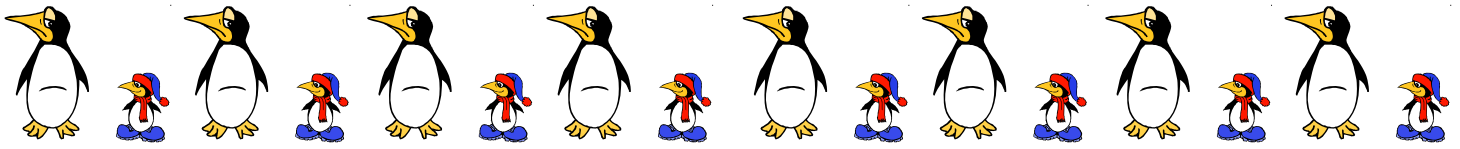


*As a sign of a new beginning for GDOT in 2006, a rainbow arches over a West Friendly Avenue intersection.*

**GDOT**  
*Snapshot*



*With the combined forces of GTA and HEAT, there is always a bus going your way!*



*Crews at the vehicle graphics company "wrap" a HEAT bus for service.*



*Strategic Information Specialist Kevin Elwood speaks to a radio station audience about the new GTA Southtown Connector.*



*Students board HEAT Route 73 for another day of classes at UNCG.*



*Parking's Don Norman inspects a Greene Street parking meter, ensuring everything is in working order.*



*Parking's Jeff Teague at the Bellemeade Street parking deck.*

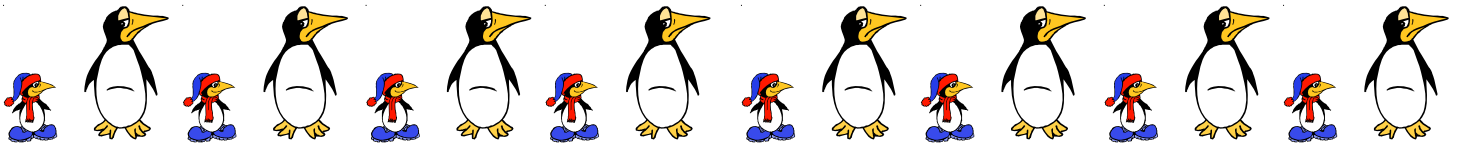


*Director Jim Westmoreland addresses students in the 2006 City Academy class at the Depot.*



*Planning's Lydia McIntyre signs in guests at the BiPed Open House event.*





*Jim Westmoreland and Engineering's Chris Spencer greet guests at the Greene Street Streetscape dedication reception.*



*Business and Operations Manager Michael Cramer displays the handiwork of the GDOT Sign Shop.*



*At the annual Get Down! Town event, GTA's George Linney operates the "Wheel of HEAT" as Sharon Smiley prepares giveaways.*



*Strutting in the Fun 4th parade are Public Transportation's Libby James along with her daughter Melissa.*



*Chris Spencer is interviewed by a news reporter near the downtown roundabout.*



*Students at City Academy participate in a road designing project offered by the Engineering Division.*